

# Passport to College Pilot Program

Higher Education Coordinating Board  
October 27, 2009

Think you can't  
go to college?

Think again.

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The state of Washington has created the **Passport to College Promise** just for foster youth like you.

This new program is designed to encourage foster youth to prepare for and succeed in college.



This is *your*  
**Passport to College.**

# Purpose of Passport

## **Created in 2007 as a six-year pilot (RCW 28B.117)**

- To encourage current and former foster care youth to prepare for, attend, and successfully complete higher education
- To provide current and former foster care youth with the educational planning, information, institutional support, and direct financial resources necessary for them to succeed in higher education

Complete evaluation and recommendations due by WISPP  
December 2012

# Primary Components

- Pre-college outreach to underage foster youth to promote educational aspiration and preparation
  - DSHS “SETuP” program
- Leverage and enhance student support services offered by colleges
  - Agree to the “viable plan” tenets
- Provide student aid fund
  - Need-based with reasonable amount of self-help required

# National & WA Foster Data

- Nationally, half of youth from foster care complete high school (compared to 70% of general population)
- Only 20% of high school graduates from foster care enroll in college nationally (compared to 60% of general population)
- In Washington State, less than one-third complete high school or a GED
- About 42% participate in postsecondary education in WA, yet less than 2% attain degrees\*

\*Northwest Foster Care Alumni Study, sponsored by Casey Family Programs (CFP) in 2005.

## Supplemental Education Transition Planning (SETuP) provides:

- information about postsecondary education and training opportunities for foster youth ages 14-18
- assistance with pre-college readiness, financial aid, college admissions applications, and transportation and housing

Region 1 – Spokane

*Volunteers of America*

Region 2 – Yakima

*Catholic Family & Children Services*

Region 3 – Mount Vernon

*YouthNet*

Region 4 – Seattle

*YMCA*

Region 5 – Tacoma

*Pierce County Alliance*

Region 6 – Olympia

*Community Youth Services*

- Last year, 90% of students served through SETuP either advanced to the next grade level, graduated, or completed their GED program
- Of the students that were 18 years old, 92% completed financial aid applications
- Nearly half of youth served were students of color

SETuP 2008-09 Students by Race/Ethnicity	
Caucasian	52.6%
African American	23.7%
Hispanic/Latino	9.2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.9%
Native American	8.6%
Other	3.9%

# Other Outreach

## Support of website for foster youth:

[www.independence.wa.gov](http://www.independence.wa.gov)

- Online application for Passport & the Educational Training Voucher
- Directory of designated campus support staff
- The addition of health information



# Training

## For institutions, SETuP and other providers:

- At Pacific Lutheran University & Eastern Washington University & via ITV
- Review of Casey Family Program's Guide to Student Success
- Concurrent sessions regarding DSHS, financial aid, and recruitment and retention
- CSF launching of a social networking site, *Destination Graduation* for college professionals and social service providers [www.destinationgraduation.ning.com](http://www.destinationgraduation.ning.com)





# Institutional Viable Plan

- Financial incentives provided to 48 institutions
- Viable plan based on Casey Family Program guidance
- Designated support staff to guide youth
- Review student budgets on a case-by-case basis and tailor financial aid packages
- Provide institutional leadership to advocate for the program's success
- Connect with social services and independent living providers on as-needed basis

# Breakthrough Data Exchanges

## IT processes – data match for student eligibility & payments to institutions

- Authorization through consent, common application, and FAFSA
- Exchange of 2,300 records to date to verify eligibility
  - 73% identified through FAFSA

The screenshot shows a web application interface for an "Eligibility Checker". At the top, there is a green "Welcome" banner. On the left is a navigation menu with categories: "Admin" (Manage Users, User groups), "Common" (Change Your Password, Messages And Files, Mobility Report), "Programs" (GearUp, Passport, Check Eligibility), "SIG", "SWS", "WaFax", "WAVE", "Utilities" (Grant Repayment Calculator). The "Check Eligibility" link is highlighted. The main content area is titled "Eligibility Checker" and features three tabs: "Single" (selected), "Multiple", and "File Upload". Below the tabs is a search instruction: "Enter an SSN and/or Name (partial allowed) to search for." This is followed by three input fields: "Social Security Number", "Last Name", and "First Name", separated by "AND/OR". A "Check Eligibility" button is located below the input fields. At the bottom, a yellow box contains the text: "Student eligibility is an on-going process between the HECB and DSHS. If you cannot find information on a student, please call Jenny Crane at 360-596-4806 for a manual student verification. Thank you for your patience."

# Passport Pipeline

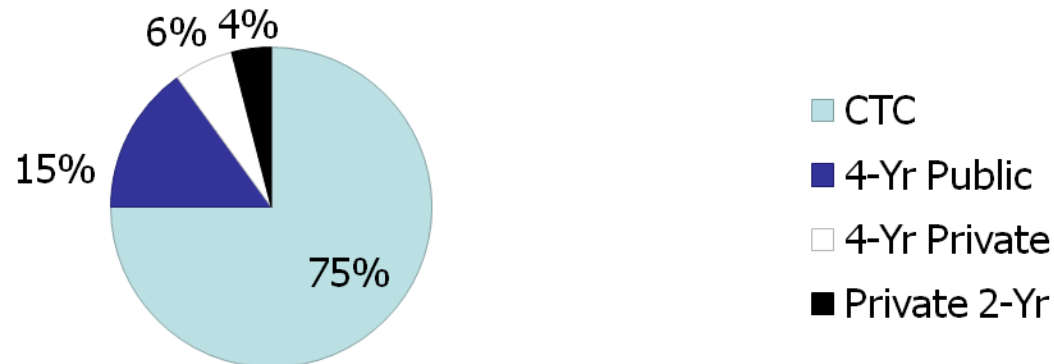
- About 608 youth meet the foster eligibility definition for Passport and 460 of those provided consent
  - The majority of eligible were identified via consent form

Applicant & Eligibility Data to Date as of Oct. 2009			
	Reviewed by DSHS	Confirmed as Foster Youth	Confirmed as Passport Eligible
Total	2,300	901	745 (460 for 2008-09)

# Passport Student Outcomes

- More than one-third of students verified as eligible enrolled – compared to 20% of high school graduate foster youth nationally that enroll
- Three-quarters of all Passport students enrolled in two-year colleges
  - Overall retention from fall to spring was 70% for these students
  - Compares to 54% of low-SES students in high demand fields
  - 56% intend to transfer; however, 36% have re-enrolled in fall 2009
- One-fourth of all Passport students enrolled in four-year institutions
  - 100% of four-year students completed the entire academic year
  - Two-thirds have re-enrolled in fall 2009

**Passport Enrollment by Sector 2008-2009**



# Scholarship Information

- The maximum award was \$6,793; the average was \$3,866
- 14 students received \$0 in Passport funding as their need was fully met
- 99% of students received Pell & 90% received State Need Grant
- 10% borrowed student loans & 11% participated in work-study
- 29% received institutional assistance
- 42% received funds from private sources
  - 22% received Governors' Scholarship & over half received Educational Training Voucher

# Legislative Changes

**In 2009, the Legislature and Governor affirmed the importance of getting more foster youth into higher education**

- Requested the HECB to work with a non-profit organization whose mission is to serve low-income, high potential students and foster youth
- Objective to implement additional strategies that result in increased retention and postsecondary success of Passport students

# College Success Foundation

College Success Foundation is contracted to provide activities related to outreach, student intervention, and community integration with the goals of:



- increase awareness of Passport among youth in foster care
- increase the number of Passport-eligible students who enroll
- provide direct personal support to Passport enrollees
  - includes monitoring of students' academic progress
- provide direct support to community/technical colleges to enhance and monitor performance on the "viable plan"
- coordinate services to youth from foster care in local communities